

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application, as amended, in view of the following remarks.

The present invention as set forth in **amended Claim 1** relates to a polymer composition, comprising:

a block copolymer (a) comprising

a polymer block A, which comprises mainly an α -methylstyrene, and

a hydrogenated or unhydrogenated polymer block B, which comprises a conjugated diene and has a weight average molecular weight of 30,000 to 200,000;

an acrylic resin (b) which is a homopolymer of methyl methacrylate or a copolymer comprising methyl methacrylate as the major component and copolymerizable monomers selected from the group consisting of (meth)acrylic acid, metal salts of (meth)acrylic acid, (meth)acrylic acid esters, vinyl acetate, aromatic vinyl compounds, maleic anhydride, maleimide compounds and mixtures thereof; and

optionally, a softener (c); and

wherein proportions (by mass) of respective components in the polymer composition are such that each of the following relationships (1) and (2) holds:

$$0.05 < W_b/W_a < 2 \quad (1) \text{ and}$$

$$W_c/(W_a + W_b + W_c) < 0.5 \quad (2)$$

wherein W_a , W_b , and W_c represent the amounts (by mass) of the block copolymer (a), the acrylic resin (b) and the softener (c), respectively.

In contrast, Kobayashi et al and Tomoki et al fail to disclose or suggest a polymer composition as claimed.

The polymers of Tomoki et al are different from the claimed polymers because they are isobutylene based polymers. See the abstract of Tomoki et al.

The polymers of Kobayashi et al are different from the claimed polymers because they are ethylenic copolymers. For example, Kobayashi et al may contain 5-80% of ethylene/(meth)acrylic acid copolymer and ethylene/(meth)acrylate copolymer. However, the list of comonomers in component b) of Claim 1 does not include ethylene.

Therefore, the rejection of Claims 1, 3-10, 13-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Kobayashi et al and the rejection of Claims 1, 4-10 and 14-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Tomoki et al are believed to be unsustainable as the present invention is neither anticipated nor obvious and withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

The rejection of Claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd paragraph, is obviated by the amendment of Claim 1.

This application presents allowable subject matter, and the Examiner is kindly requested to pass it to issue. Should the Examiner have any questions regarding the claims or otherwise wish to discuss this case, he is kindly invited to contact Applicants' below-signed representative, who would be happy to provide any assistance deemed necessary in speeding this application to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.
Norman F. Oblon



Kirsten A. Grueneberg, Ph.D.
Registration No.: 47,297

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
NFO:KAG: